

# LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

## PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

At this point in the Mass the gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar by members of the congregation and presented to the Priest. The collection and sometimes donations for the poor may also be part of the 'offertory' but not token items which can be retrieved after Mass.

The purpose of any chant at this point in the Mass, is to accompany the taking of the collection, the procession and Presentation of the gifts of bread, water and wine.

The prayers accompanying the placing of the gifts on the Altar are based upon Jewish table-prayers.

*'Blessed are you Lord God of all creation  
for through your goodness we have received The Bread we offer you.  
Fruit of the earth and work of human hands  
it will become for us the Bread of Life'*

These words express praise to God for the gift of creation and for human involvement in the making of bread and wine. Since wheat needs to be ground and grapes crushed before the bread and wine are made, the element of sacrifice is implied. The Mass is the Sacrifice of Christ and in union with Him, through the ministry of the Priest, we offer our lives to the Father.

As the Priest washes his hands he says quietly 'Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin'. The Priest then invites the congregation to pray. In the revised text it runs:

'Pray brethren (brothers and sisters) that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Almighty Father.'

The Presentation of the Gifts concludes with a Prayer over the Offerings.

## **Questions**

- 1. Do we need an 'offertory hymn' when the gifts are presented or would quiet organ music or silence be more appropriate at this point or should there be variety?*
- 2. Should there be many more families involved in the Offertory procession?*
- 3. Do you agree with the custom which has taken on in some places especially Ireland where at the offertory time during funeral masses people bring up all sorts of objects associated with the deceased such as football jerseys, golf clubs etc?*
- 4. What would you like to see altered at the 'presentation of the gifts' during Mass.*